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AN EXHIBITION
OF
EARLY EDITIONS OF THE WORKS OF
HONORÉ DE BALZAC
(1799 - 1850)

December 1949 - January 1950

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Exhibition Catalogues

Number 4

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B Floor, Outside Scribner Lounge.
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Portrait of Balzac

Facsimile of a lithograph by Delarue after a drawing
by Julien, first published in Le Voleur, January 5,
1836.

(Les Cahiers Balzaciens, no. 3)

[EX 3232.613 v.3]

Self-portrait of Balzac

Facsimile of a sketch made in the autograph album of the Countess Bolognini. On the left are moneybags, under which the words "Mes Rêves" are written; under the prison-bars, on the right, the words "Mes Réalités."

(Les Cahiers Balzaciens no. 2)

[EX 3232.613 v.2]

Balzac's handwriting
(facsimile)

Manuscript fragments, unpublished during Balzac's
life-time, of Les Cent Contes Drolatiques.

Published, with facsimile reproductions, in the
"Cahiers Balzaciens," in 1925.

(Cahier Balzaciens no. 4)

[EX 3232.613 v.4]

Honoré de Balzac
par
Théophile Gautier

Edition revue et augmentée, avec un portrait gravé
à l'eau-forte par E. HÉDOUIN.

Poulet-Malassis et De Brosse, Paris, 1859.

[EX 3232.686]

Clotilde de Lusignan, ou le Beau Juif.
Paris, 1822.

This is the first published novel written entirely by Balzac. Earlier in the same year, two novels written in collaboration with l'Egreville had appeared. Balzac uses the pseudonym of "Lord R'Hoone," an anagram for "Honoré". Clotilde de Lusignan, like Balzac's other youthful pot-boilers, is a romantic historical novel in the Walter Scott manner. It was re-issued in 1840 under the title L'Israélite, under the pseudonym of "Horace de Saint-Aubin," but was never integrated into the Comédie Humaine.

[EX 3232.325 4 vols.]

Petit dictionnaire critique et anecdotique des Enseignes^f
de Paris, par un Batteur de pavé. Paris, 1826.

Another of Balzac's early anonymous publications, which has the added interest of having been printed at his own printing establishment: "Imprimerie de H. Balzac, Rue des Marais S. -G., n. 17" [corresponds to the present Rue Visconti, 6th arrondissement.]

These amusing comments on picturesque shop signs--
A la Belle Indécise, A la Clef du Bonheur, Au bon
Pêcheur de Sangsues, A la Toilette de Psyché, etc.--
have been republished in posthumous editions of Balzac's
complete works with other "Physionomies et esquisses
parisiennes."

[EX 3232.374s]

L'Art de mettre sa cravate de mille et une manières,
enseigné et démontré en dix-huit leçons ... par le
Baron Emile de L'Empesé ... ouvrage indispensable
à tous les fashionables ... Paris, Librairie
Universelle, 1828.

This little treatise on how to tie a necktie --
part of a series including such titles as L'Art de payer
ses dettes, L'Art de ne jamais déjeuner chez soi, etc.--
is generally attributed to Balzac. Among the methods
discussed is the American style -- shown here.

(Pp. 80-81; plate D)

[EX 3232.311]

Le Dernier Chouan, ou la Bretagne en 1800. Paris, 1829.

This is the first edition of the first of Balzac's novels to appear under his own name: "Honoré Balzac." The second, revised edition appeared in 1834 under the title Les Chouans, under which it has since been known. It was later incorporated into the Comédie Humaine in the series "Scènes de la vie militaire." Portraying guerilla warfare in the "bocage" country on the confines of Brittany and Normandy, the novel is at times reminiscent of Cooper's tales of border warfare in America.

[EX 3232.328 vols. 1,2,3,4, bound in two]

La Peau de Chagrin, roman philosophique par M. de Balzac.
Paris, 1831. First edition. Frontispieces drawn by
Tony Jehannot, engraved by Porret.

Beginning with this novel, Balzac henceforth calls himself "de Balzac."

The title (generally translated as the "Wild Ass's Skin") refers to the piece of magic skin given by an old man to Raphael the hero. This skin will insure the gratification of every desire, but will diminish with each wish granted, and with it goes the life of the possessor.

(vol. I: pp.116-117; vol. II: title)

[EX 3232.371 vols. 1,2.]

Lawrence Sterne, The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman.

Showing the flourish made by the Corporal's stick --
Copied by Balzac on the title-page of La Peau de Chagrin.

(London, 1780: vol. 4, pp. 186-187)

[EX 3943.7.1780 vol. 4]

Balzac illustré. La Peau de Chagrin. Etudes sociales.
Paris, Delloye & Lecou, 1838.

In 1838 the publishers Delloye & Lecou brought out the first volume of a proposed series, Balzac illustré, which was to have used the talents of noted artists of the time. This edition of La Peau de Chagrin -- with steel engravings by Baron, Janet-Lange, Gavarni and others -- was the only volume published. The engravings were later struck off separately -- and these are much sought after by collectors.

(p. 42: Engr. by Joubert: "... et regardez cette Peau de Chagrin...")

[EX 3232.371.12]

Nouveaux Contes philosophiques, par M. de Balzac. Paris,
1832.

First edition of the four short stories included:
Maître Cornélius, Madame Firminani, L'Auberge rouge,
Louis Lambert.

Frontispiece drawn by Tony Johannot, engraved by
Porret.

[EX 3232.368]

Contes bruns, par une [tête à l'envers]. Paris, 1832.
Paris, 1832. Vignette by Tony Johannot, engraved by
Thompson.

This collection of short stories, published anonymously, includes work by Charles Rabou, Ph. Chasles and Balzac. ("Une Conversation entre onze heures et minuit").

Commenting on this publication, Balzac later wrote: "Ils étaient trois, avec de l'esprit comme quatre; trois anonymes, ayant nom Chasles, Balzac et Rabou, qui avaient fait des contes. Ils les appelèrent bruns, sans doute pour satisfaire aux lois de la couleur locale. Restait à présenter les trois chefs sous le même bonnet: on signa d'une tête à l'envers...."

[EX 3232.3258]

Le Père Goriot, Histoire parisienne publiée par M. de
Balzac. Paris, 1835.

First edition.

[EX 3232.373 vols. 1,2]

Le Lys dans la vallée, par M. de Balzac. Paris, 1836.

First edition.

Later took its place in the Comédie Humaine among
the "Scènes de la Vie de Province."

[EX 3232.361 vols. 1,2]

Histoire de la Grandeur et de la Décadence de César
Birotteau, Parfumeur, Chevalier de la Légion d'
Honneur, Adjoint au Maire du 2^e arrondissement de la
Ville de Paris...Paris, 1838.

First edition. Later included in the Comédie
Humaine in the "Scènes de la vie parisienne."

(vol. I, p. 295, plate, "Huile Céphalique" vol. II,
title.)

[EX 3232.346 vols. 1,2]

Revue parisienne, dirigée par M. de Balzac. Paris, 1840.

Only three numbers of this review were published: July 25, August 25, and September 25. Balzac was responsible for most of the contents, which include several stories published for the first time.

Among the works by other authors reviewed are: Stendhal's La Chartreuse de Parme and Sainte-Beuve's Histoire de Port-Royal.

The July 25th issue is open to a discussion of J. Fenimore Cooper's novel Lac Ontario [The Pathfinder].

[EX 3232.378 p.69]

Le Curé de Village, Scène de la Vie de Campagne, par
H. de Balzac. Paris, 1841.

First edition.

[EX 3232.327]

Les Deux Frères, par H. de Balzac. Paris, 1842.

First edition.

This novel is dedicated to Charles Nodier.

[EX 3232.329 2 vols.]

Les Ressources de Quinola, comédie en cinq actes, en
prose, et précédée d' un prologue, par M. de Balzac...
Paris, 1842.

First edition. This is a presentation copy from the
publisher, Souverain.

Les Ressources de Quinola was one of Balzac's
relatively unsuccessful attempts to write for the
theatre. The play was performed at the Odéon in 1842.

[EX 3232.3775]

LA COMÉDIE HUMAINE

Under this title a collected edition of Balzac's works was issued by the publishers Furne, Dubochet, Hetzel & Paulin, 1842-1848. This 17-volume set is referred to as the "first edition" of the Comédie Humaine, although most of the novels and short stories had previously been published separately. The series is illustrated with wood engravings by Tony Johannot, Meissonier, Gavarni, C. Nanteuil, Daumier and others.

Balzac's plan for the Comédie Humaine was:

ETUDES DE MOEURS

Scènes de la vie privée
Scènes de la vie de province
Scènes de la vie parisienne
Scènes de la vie politique
Scènes de la vie militaire
Scènes de la vie de campagne

ETUDES PHILOSOPHIQUES

ETUDES ANALYTIQUES

In the later editions of Balzac's work, published after his death (1850), the later novels and stories were fitted into this framework.

[EX 3232.1842]

Le Père Goriot. Paris, 1843. Included in volume IX
of the Furne edition of La Comédie Humaine ("Etudes
de Moeurs", "Scènes de la vie parisienne.")

Honoré Daumier did a portrait of Vautrin and one of
Le Père Goriot [shown here] for this edition.

(pp.324-5)

[EX 3232.1842 vol. 9]

Physiologie de l'employé, par M. de Balzac. Illustrated
by Trimolet. Paris, 1846.

Balzac wrote several of these short humorous sketches for the popular illustrated series of "Physiologies." In an earlier age "physiognomies," stemming from Lavater's works, were popular; in Balzac's day "physiologies," reflecting perhaps current natural history studies, were the fashion. The attractive illustrations by artists such as Daunier, Gavarni and others, have made the "Physiologies" popular with collectors. The Princeton Library has an excellent collection of them.

[EX 3229.717.14]

Paris marié. Philosophie de la Vie conjugale. Par H. de Balzac, commentée par Gavarni. Paris, 1846.

The material used in this volume was later incorporated into Petites misères de la vie conjugale, which in turn was included in the Comédie Humaine in the series "Etudes analytiques."

[EX 3292.3683]

For the modern reader:

The best of the recent editions of Balzac's works are:

Oeuvres complètes de Honoré de Balzac edited
by Marcel Bouteron and Henri Longnon, published by
Louis Conard, Paris, 39 volumes, 1912-1938.

[3232.1912]

La Comédie Humaine, texte établi par Marcel
Bouteron, "Bibliothèque de la Pléiade." Gallimard.
Paris, 10 volumes, 1935-1947.

[3232.1935]